782 One month before the celebration rice liquor is poured into a hollowed-
796 out gourd bottle in the house of the S'iem sad and offered before the rishot Blei as a 'suit' (sacrifice of drink). This is done in order to in-
[769] form the u Suidnia long S'iem (the spirit of the first great-uncle on
[774] the maternal side who was the first king), the ka Blei long S'iem (the divinity who makes kings kings) and the u Blei Shillong (the god Shillong), that preparations are now being made for the Puja and that they might help with them.

776 The u Blei Shillong plays the chief part in the whole ceremony. He enjoys great reverence among the Khasi, especially in the kingdom Nongkrem and Nylliem. Not far from Nongkrem a mountain
[133] peak rises 6,450 feet above the sea. It is the highest peak in the Khasi Mountains; its name is "Shillong Peak." Here is the seat of
[773] the god Shillong. The story goes that a man appeared here once, who said he /894/ had not been born but came of himself (shu long). He also told the people that they would receive the kings, S'iem. So the god who lives here was called u Shu long (he who is out of him-
[163] self), from which the Europeans gradually made the word Shillong and also gave this name to the splendid mountain station in the heart of the Khasi Mountains.

796 After the S'iem sad has determined exactly the day of the cere-
782 monies, the news of this is sent out two weeks prior to the ceremony to the village elders (Rangbah shnong). This is done on the day of the large market (jew duh), which takes place every eighth day. Two weeks after is the pom blang, also on the day of the large market, which is discussed below.

The way in which the invitation is issued is interesting. A num-
[211] ber of chains about an ell long are made of bamboo rings. These are called kyrwoh. One of these is sent to the oldest man of each village. Since the Khasi formerly had no script, this bamboo chain always served as a sign of invitation or summons to the S'iem for ceremonies, or of danger of war, or of court matters and such. The degree of urgency was shown by the form of the links; in the case of great haste the form was longish and flat, otherwise correspondingly rounder. The sending of the kyrwoh to the village elders serves now as a sign of invitation for the whole village to appear at the ceremonies and at the same time as a demand to gather together the prescribed sacrificial gifts. Each of the six districts, into which the kingdom Nong-
[651] krem is divided, must furnish a goat; each individual hut must pay a tax (called pynshok) of one rupee and four annas in addition. Very poor people only have to pay one anna or even only a half. The sacrificial gifts, such as rice, various sacrificial animals, fish, brandy

773 Several Khasis claim that the devil pre-
782 scribed to their ancestors the method of sacrificing. On the other hand others maintain that in times past a man of rare size and strength came to their country. This man accomplished wonderful things, and commanded their ancestors to sacrifice and at the same time prescribed for them the method of sacrificing. Today the place
● [103] of his former dwelling on a mountain near Shillong is still pointed out. Since something divine was suspected in that man, he was called u 'lei shillong (the god Shillong).

776 The Khasi believe in a highest being, whom they call u blei nongthaw (1) (the creator god).

[194] 1. Pronounciation of Khasi (method of writing): ei is pronounced as two syllables, e - i, w is pronounced like u, aw is therefore like a - u, sh is pronounced like sch = phonetic ś.

Just as the ideas about this person are very hazy, so are the concepts of eternity and the soul.

775 The Khasi are not in agreement among themselves about the conception of what happens to the soul after death. Several say that after death the soul goes up in the air and becomes air and therefore exists no longer. But most of them believe that the soul exists after death and can be happy or unhappy. But this does not depend on personal guilt or sin but only on the conscientious completion of the burial ceremonies.

[631] The country in which the Khasi live is
776 divided into several districts, which were formerly ruled by several kings before the English came. [408] According to the Khasi each district

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

APPENDIX

SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM SHELLA AND JATINGA

SHELLA

Shella is situated on the lowest of the southern slopes of the Khasi Hills, bordering on the Sylhet plain of East Pakistan. For centuries the people of Shella maintained close trading connections with the people of the plain, so that they have been much influenced by the Hindu. They have been to some extent divorced economically and culturally from their own people who live in the uplands and on higher part of the slopes. Actually, this is a natural result of their geographical location. From Cherrapunjee, the southern edge of the upland Khasi Hills, only a narrow footpath goes down to Shella. The altitude of Cherrapunjee is about 5,000 feet and of Shella from 500 to 1,000 feet, and the distance between them is 8 miles. The path descends very steeply and is full of hard stones. This difficulty of communication is also why the Hindu influence did not penetrate the upland Khasi, as in the case of the Jaintia Hills.[1]

This area has a unique political organization which differs from the majority of Khasi states who are traditionally ruled by the members of the Siem clan. Shella is organized as a confederation, called 'Shella Confederacy,' and consists of four local villages. The head of the village is called *wadadhar*, and is elected by the villagers every three years. The number of households of the Shella Confederacy was about 900 in January 1956. The names of the four villages and their *wadadhar* in 1956 were:

Name of village	*Name of wadadhar*
1. Shella	Devish Mohan Roy
2. Mushtoh	Ditojou Roy
3. Nongtrai	Orju Roy
4. Tyngnger	Jabuni Roy

Each village is divided into sections. For instance, Shella village has nine sections: (1) Jasir, (2) Disong, (3) Duba, (4) Jamau, (5) Nongrum, (6) Nongnong,

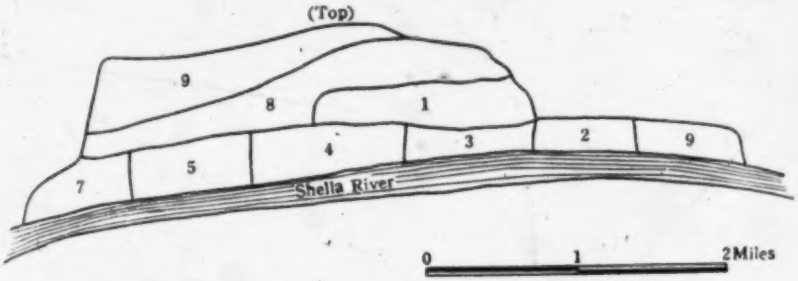
1. However, Shella was the only way out and the main gateway from the Khasi Hills to the plain; it was here that the British first entered the Khasi Hills. They proceeded from Shella to Cherrapunjee and made the latter headquarters of the Khasi Hills in 1833.

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

[Shella]

(7) Mawrongkhong, (8) Rynsong-kanor, and (9) Sholap, as shown in Map 9. In Shella village the number of households in each section ranges between 10 and 80. Such a section is called *kher*, and was supposed to be the site of households of segments of every *kur* (clan). It seems that Shella village was once composed of nine different *kur* which could intermarry with each other. However, nowadays, each section, as appeared in my census, has nothing to do with the *kur* as such; it is simply a geographical section. According to the information which I gathered, there had been a tendency for the same *kur* people to gather within the section, before the great earthquake in 1897 brought considerable

[102]



MAP 9. — *Distribution of Sections in Shella Village.*

damages and death to this area: many of them left the village at the time and many houses changed their sites in the village when they were reconstructed. For instance, the composition of Jasir section in January 1956 was as follows:

Name of kur	*Number of houses*	*Name of kur*	*Number of houses*
1. Yuchyne	7	9. Lyngdoh	1
2. Iunei	4	10. Riang	1
3. Lorit	4	11. Nongtathiang ...	1
4. Synren	3	12. Loki	1
5. Ksaieng	3	13. Kanto	1
6. Nongbri	3	14. Kanti	1
7. Siem	2	15. Khelwa	1
8. Iunoi	2	16. ?	5
		Total	40

The people said that in Jasir, the Yuchyne was the most influential *kur*, and must have been the original *kur* in this section. However, no clan solidarity could be observed. These seven households were socially and economically quite independent of each other, as are all other households. As a whole, the importance of *kur* diminished a great deal in this village. Five households in Jasir were reluctant to mention their *kur*; some of them did not care about their *kur*; others were not themselves certain to which *kur* they belonged. The *kur* is losing its function to a great extent. This can be ascribed to the high degree of sophistication and mobility. However, except for one Siem woman who came from the uplands and married a man of this village, all 15 *kur* mentioned above are local clans frequently found within the Shella Confederacy. In this area also community endogamy was predominant. Perhaps the Shella

18: Godwin-Austen G-3 (ca. 1872) 1875 AR7
Khasi AR7

clans were very much as we find them at the present day among the Nagas and Kukis, beyond and bordering our present extreme limits, viz. that of constant feud. They are now the quietest, most peaceful, and contented of all the hill people on the eastern frontier.

In my former paper I did not allude to the cairns in these hills, which I am inclined to think are works of greater age than the stone structures. The custom is one that certainly has long since been given up, for I could not obtain any satisfactory account of them. They are only to be seen on the northern side of the Khasi plateau, and Dr. Hooker, in his account of his trips to the Kollong Rock, did not fail to notice them. About Mairaug and towards Nougstoin they are very numerous, and always stand on commanding situations. On the path leading down the grassy spur to the stone monuments previously described, near Nougshai, is a very fine large example of a cairn, about eight feet high. They are usually plain hemispherical mounds of earth; but this one is faced all round at the base with slabs of stone about four feet high; they are frequently not higher than six feet. A distant view is shown in Plate iii.

Nowhere is there any trace of the earth that forms them having been excavated close by; it must, therefore, have been carried in some short distance, to avoid unsightly hollows near the structure. I should much like to have dug into one of these cairns, but was afraid to hurt the feelings of the people by doing so. They are very probably cineraries of an earlier form to those now made of stone, and this point it might be interesting to clear up.

Beyond the Khasi area no cairns are to be found, at least I had never come across any until visiting North Munipur last winter (1872—73), where, at the head of the Imphal river, on the direct road from Samaguting, are four fine cairns, all faced with large bouldors. They are old, and the Nagas now living in the village near said they had been made by another clan of Nagas, who long ago had gone further north, and the site of whose village had been lately re-occupied by Kukis.

Mr. C. B. Clarke, in a paper read lately before your Institute, refers to the different forms of the cinerary in the Khasi Hills; but he has not quite exhausted the subject, or got further than I did, although with regard to the disposal of the ashes of the dead he gives some further interesting particulars.

As I think that drawings are of very great interest, and better exhibit the many different forms of bone depository or cinerary that have been adopted at different periods by tribes inhabiting localities very far apart, and often quite unconnected affinitively,